

Name: Ms. Campbell

Dramatic Monologue Analysis

Title: Dover Beach - Matthew Arnold

What is the Structure of the poem? Consider stanza, meter, and type of poem

Dover Beach is a dramatic monologue (one speaker, listener does not respond, character of speaker revealed) divided into four stanzas (14 lines, 6 lines, 8 lines, 9 lines) that is written in Free Verse (but contains many lines of Blank Verse - unrhymed iambic pentameter).

What "story" is being told? What is the persona of the narrator?

The speaker is looking out his window across the seemingly calm English Channel toward France and speaking to his love. The poem starts by describing the natural beauty of the landscape and the sounds of the ocean but shifts at the end to focus more on conflict in the modern world.

What is the theme of the poem? How is this theme developed?

The main theme is the conflict between religion and science. It is developed through the extended metaphor of "the sea of faith" and the image of the modern world as a "darkling plain" where armies battle.

What figures of speech are used in the poem? How does each contribute to the poem?

Stanza 1 "the grating roar" - image of discord, things are not what they seem. Stanza 2 Allusion to Sophocles - emphasizing the eternal of human misery. Stanza 3 Extended Metaphor: The Sea of Faith - the protective, motherly, all-encompassing nature of the "sea of faith" is retreating in the face of science and the world is left exposed. Stanza 4 Parallelism - pessimistic list of characteristics of the modern world (science). Stanza 4 "the darkling plain" - battle between religion and science where the battle is happening in the dark and there is intellectual (science) and emotional (faith) confusion.

How would you describe the tone of the poem? The mood?

Feelings of alienation and isolation. The speaker has pessimistic feelings about the modern world and the reader is left feeling conflicted.

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